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President: Mr. INSANALLY (Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 112 *(continued)*

INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL

HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY MEETINGS TO EXAMINE THE STATUS OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGAINST THE ILLICIT PRODUCTION, SALE, DEMAND, TRAFFIC AND DISTRIBUTION OF NARCOTICS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES: DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/48/L.12)

The PRESIDENT: The first speaker this afternoon is the representative of the Czech Republic, on whom I now call.

Mr. SLABÝ (Czech Republic): We are meeting at a unique moment in the complex history of the world, at a time when many decades-old East-West barriers have collapsed. At the same time, the world today is threatened by a global challenge to the stability of the international community as well as to the democratic institutions of individual countries. The illegal drugs trade is delivering narcotics to approximately 100 million drug-addicted persons. From 1970 to 1985, Western European countries experienced a real narcotics boom, with all the attendant health and social consequences. The drug problem has grown into an epidemic of a kind never experienced by Europe before.

In the former communist and today's post-communist States of Central and Eastern Europe, developments have been less dramatic. Still, the problem existed, and it grew significantly during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. But thanks to the strong system of social control, the limited possibilities for foreign travel and the lack of freely-disposable foreign currencies, neither demand nor supply reached the magnitude experienced in Western democracies. Communist regimes used to be consistent in making the problem of drugs a taboo; in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe there was therefore little social awareness of the drug problem as such or of ways to cope with it.

Developments on the drug scene since 1990 in the former Czechoslovakia and subsequently in the Czech Republic have completely changed my country's internal situation in this respect. The opening up of borders, the liberalization of society, changes in values, and the transition of the country's economy have all resulted in a sharp increase in both the supply of and demand for drugs, in the creation of a market for classic hard drugs, and indeed in the emergence of international organized crime. In 1991 there were 6,590 registered addicts in the Czech Republic; yet the so-called grey zone, the number of addicted but not registered persons, is estimated to have been 10 times that figure. Lower age groups, including schoolchildren, are now being threatened. The situation in my country has been described as "a heroin epidemic at the gate".

This new situation has led us to identify the abuse and illegal use of drugs as a grave domestic social problem, and has challenged appropriate governmental and non-governmental organizations to deal with it.

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At the end of 1991 the Government created an anti-drug agency with decentralized regional offices, and in 1992 a national drug-information service. The Government emphasizes that the drug menace cannot be solved by isolated efforts, but only by the use of systematic and combined measures in the fields of criminal prevention, employment policy, education, health and social care, protection of public health and other spheres. Shortly after the division of Czechoslovakia, on 1 January 1993, the Government of the Czech Republic established an interministerial anti-drug commission headed by the Minister of the Interior.

However, international cooperation in the field of drugs is essential for us as well. It constitutes an inseparable part of the integration of the Czech Republic into European structures and into the world community. In this respect let me stress how highly we appreciate the level of cooperation with the specialized bodies of the United Nations, with the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe, the European Communities, the World Health Organization (WHO) and other international bodies, and the assistance they are providing to the Czech Republic. One example is the agreement recently concluded between the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and the Czech Republic relating to a programme of assistance in the context of the "Balkan route". The programme aims to strengthen operational enforcement results in reducing the flow of illicit narcotics passing into and through the territory of the Czech Republic.

The decision to hold four high-level plenary meetings at the present session to urgently examine the status of international cooperation against the illicit production, sale, demand and distribution of narcotic and psychotropic substances reflects the growing recognition by the international community that our common objectives will be achieved only through the pooling of our efforts. As many speakers have already noted, the United Nations is adapting to an environment in which it has to handle many new and complex problems facing the international community, including drug abuse. The contours of a more efficient struggle against drug abuse are taking more specific forms. More and more States have acceded to international narcotics-control treaties.

The establishment of the UNDCP, an integrated and specialized United Nations body to combat narcotic drugs, was the result of the international community's recognition of the need for global efforts. We appreciate the UNDCP's crucial role in international drug-control activities. We have noted with satisfaction encouraging signs of progress in cooperation between the UNDCP on the one hand and other international organizations, in particular international development and financial institutions, on the other. We also regard the Global Programme of Action as extremely beneficial for national anti-drug programmes, since it has provided comprehensive guidelines for combating drug abuse and for coordinating anti-drug policies.

The Czech Parliament is in the process of formulating an overall anti-drug policy on the basis of a proposal by the Government. In accordance with the Global Programme of Action and the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control, we are preparing an action-oriented anti-drug plan under which we envisage taking all possible measures to implement the recommendations of those two documents. My Government's basic aim is to create a social, political and economic climate that would minimize the destructive influence of drugs. It would include protecting the citizen against drugs and support his individual decision to live a drug-free life, while fully respecting his civil rights. Not even so-called soft drugs will be legalized in my country.

To this end the Government has already taken all necessary measures to decrease the drug supply. The Czech Republic has begun preventive actions at the national level and is involved in training health personnel. The Government has also declared its commitment to establish a sound legal and social system. Relevant legislation continues to be amended and other legislative changes are being prepared in order fully to implement international drug control conventions. Steps have been taken to monitor and stop the illegal production of psychotropic substances. Many aspects of this national anti-drug programme are still under discussion, including the replacement of the above-mentioned interministerial commission by a new governmental agency.

My country has concluded bilateral agreements with several countries on combating drug-related crime, in particular drug trafficking, and has participated in European meetings of the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA). The effort to keep the country safe from drugs requires adequate resources. We therefore highly appreciate the invaluable international assistance that has been made available in providing expertise and equipment both bilaterally and multilaterally.

In conclusion, let me assure the Assembly that the Czech Republic shares the belief that to succeed in the war against drugs the international community has to continue its concerted efforts to combat all aspects of the drug menace. The Czech Republic will be a part of it.

The PRESIDENT: I am now pleased to call on Mr. Michael Ausserwinkler, Minister for Health of Austria.

Mr. AUSSERWINKLER (Austria): The preamble to the United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and the preamble to the United Nations Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 both refer to the ambivalent properties of narcotics and psychotropic substances. Administered in accordance with the state of medical art they are indispensable, but if they are abused they can lead to enormous human suffering, loss of social status and disastrous economic consequences. As a physician and a government Minister of Health I am confronted daily with this ambivalent situation of licit and illicit use and - like all representatives - I am well aware of the urgent need for balanced global action in coordination with the United Nations. I therefore consider it extremely important for us in this framework of high-level plenary meetings to define our position on the world-wide drug problem, decide on our further approach and agree on further measures to be taken. The adoption of the draft resolution before us reflects a broad consensus on the next steps to be taken.

How to make use of the positive properties of some drugs - the fact that often they help to stop intolerable pain and, if applied *lege artis*, at the right time and in the right dosage, lead to negligible addiction problems - is a subject to which the World Health Organization (WHO) has been devoting itself for some time with a great sense of responsibility. In accordance with the recommendations of WHO, we in Austria are planning to invest a great deal in this area and we hope that the appeals from WHO will be listened to throughout the world.

The other, negative side of the coin has been familiar to all of us for many years from the numerous examples of and experiences with drug addicts, dealers, criminals and launderers of drug money. As the International Narcotics Control Board points out in its 1992 annual report, the numerous efforts made at the national and the international level have, unfortunately, not succeeded so far in checking the world-wide abuse of, and illegal trafficking in drugs, with their associated violence and corruption. This is still true despite three United Nations Conventions on drugs - the Single Convention of 1961, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.

What I consider to be essential is that drug problems can often be solved at their roots, that is to say, long before they come to light, by educational, family, employment, housing and social politics.

These facts are familiar to all of us and have been incorporated into the Declaration of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, held in Vienna in 1987, and into the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control. The call to ensure living conditions which prevent the abuse of drugs is also part of the Global Programme of Action of 1990 and the final declaration of the World Ministerial Summit held in London in the same year.

The question then arises: What are we doing to put these ideas into practice? With reference to the objectives of prevention, treatment and rehabilitation, I should like to report briefly on the current situation in Austria.

Since 1980 Austria has had a statutory system for collecting data on drug abusers. As those data clearly show, the situation in the area of illegal drugs was stationary in the 1980s and moderate in comparison with other European countries. It is only since 1991 that we have seen a marked rise, especially in the use of heroin by young people.

The recent alarming increase in heroin consumption by teenagers has prompted the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education to issue a teaching programme on drug prevention for all schools. The programme requires that attention be paid to these problems in the teaching of all school subjects and it focuses on the discussion of habits and lifestyles which promote or reduce the individual's well-being. These materials do not concentrate primarily on drugs as such but concentrate on the question of a person's needs and how one can cope with difficult situations without taking drugs.

Currently, the Ministry of Education, with support from my Ministry, is working on a curriculum for basic and advanced training for teachers in drug prevention. In addition to specific technical expertise in drug problems, teachers are to be given advice on how to exert pedagogic influence. The Ministry of Education has also commissioned a research project to assess the efficiency, in terms of drug prevention, of various methods of organizing classroom work.

The confusion created among young people who are led to believe that illegal drugs cannot be so dangerous if public opinion considers making them more easily accessible, is very dangerous.

While there are different views as to what themes drug prevention in education should stress, there is very broad consensus that drug addicts are sick persons who are primarily in need of treatment. Since 1980 the Austrian Drugs Act has given every addict the choice of undergoing treatment instead of a criminal sentence, provided, of course, that he has not committed a serious crime. Under this law, a number of in-patient and out-patient centres were created in the early 1980s, which provide assistance to more than 5,000 persons every year and in addition give advice to a still far larger number - family members, students, teachers, and so on. Treatment and advice are free as the centres are funded entirely or in part by public authorities.

With the increasing menace of AIDS and in view of the fact that not all opiate addicts are able to go through with abstinence-oriented treatment, even with the best intentions, Austria made arrangements, in the late 1980s, for heroin addicts to undergo substitution treatment. So far, about 2,500 patients have been treated under this programme. In this context I should like to mention the manuals concerning the detection and assay of heroin, cocaine, amphetamines and other drugs in biological specimens recently issued by the Laboratory of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) in Vienna, and I am pleased to see that Austria's support of this exercise has led to some benefits for developed countries although it was originally intended primarily for developing countries.

I should like to take this opportunity to stress that we are very pleased to be the host country for UNDCP, with its various technical branches and units, with which many countries have developed a wide range of fruitful and practical cooperation. Bearing in mind the importance that Austria attaches to the activities of the Programme, we have been increasing substantially our financial contribution to its work. In this context, I should like also to express our appreciation to the UNDCP's Director-General, Mr. Giacomelli, and his staff for their work in implementing the Programme.

Returning to the substitution programme, I should like to stress that we have had favourable experience with regard to HIV prevention - there are hardly any new cases of infection in this group - and the improved general medical and social status of the patients involved. One problem remains unsolved, however. I refer to the fact that many HIV-infected persons have little chance of social reintegration, and, given their AIDS problems, they tend to fail to develop their own future perspectives.

Rehabilitation must include occupational reintegration. For many institutions that assist drug addicts, it has become standard procedure to take appropriate action in this respect - by organizing training or retraining and by helping patients to find jobs. The employment service supports these activities by providing financial aid to individuals and by funding projects for a certain time. However, with the deterioration in the labour-market situation and the rise in unemployment, it is becoming more and more difficult to find work for cured drug addicts. Such people who cannot find work receive monthly social-assistance payments, which help to meet their basic needs and include health insurance.

The drug problem is a multidisciplinary question. It relates not only to public security, the fight against crime and crime prevention, but also to issues of health, social, youth and family policy. The Austrian Federal Government is therefore promoting a coordinated approach to the causes of and the background to drug abuse and drug addiction.

Social policies, such as those relating to the fight against youth unemployment; family policies, particularly financial support for families with children; and education policies, such as the policy of free access to pre-university secondary schools and to higher education - these are regarded as being just as essential to drug prevention as are measures aimed at direct control of drugs and psychotropic substances.

Today, there is broad agreement that the drug problem is not one just of supply, in the same way as it is not one just of demand. The drug problem reflects also the unsolved social conflicts and contradictions that exist in Austria, as everywhere else in the world.

Although I, as a doctor, naturally consider the preventive approach and the treatment and reintegration of drug patients as a priority concern in drug policy, I am convinced that we cannot do without repressive action in some areas. But I also know how difficult it is to fight organized drug crime and to take on powerful gangs, bearing in mind all the resources at their disposal.

Of course, I also realize that a balanced drug policy can be successful only if is supported on a global scale. Austria is not shirking its duty. We intend, in the very near future, to issue appropriate regulations on Annexes III and IV, which, so far, have not been implemented as required by the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and, thereby, to pave the way for our formal accession to this Convention. Another essential step that

is envisaged is the full implementation of Article 12 of the United Nations Convention of 1988.

But international acts of solidarity are also needed urgently in respect of those activities that I have already said attack the deep roots of the drug problem. I refer to measures in the sphere of education, family, employment, housing and social policy. Hence, all organizations of the United Nations family have a role to play in this field, to promote the well-being of the inhabitants of planet Earth. That is why these organizations need our special support.

The PRESIDENT: I now call Mr. Mauri Pekkarinen, Minister for Internal Affairs of Finland.

Mr. PEKKARINEN (Finland): The illicit production, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs constitute an increasingly difficult problem throughout the world. The well-being and safety of large population groups, as well as the implementation of their economic, social and other human rights, are threatened by the drug problem worldwide.

The drug issue has such global dimensions that there is a clear need to intensify international co-operation. This ought to be done by involving all relevant authorities and international organizations representing the education, social-welfare, public-health, environment and law-enforcement sectors. The United Nations plays an important role in this work. The United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) has made commendable efforts to coordinate the international struggle against drugs.

Efforts have been made, through international agreements, to strengthen measures to prevent the production, sale, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs. It is important that all States ratify all the United Nations drug Conventions without delay.

There is wide agreement in the international community that the drug problem cannot be prevented merely by efforts to restrict the supply of drugs. Accordingly, in recent years, the question of demand reduction has been given increasing attention. We welcome the activities of the UNDCP in this matter. We would give favourable consideration to the inclusion in international narcotics policies and legally binding agreements of any measure aimed at reducing drug demand.

Combating drugs requires a comprehensive prevention strategy, at both the international and the national levels. The Global Programme of Action and the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control provide a comprehensive framework for drug-control activities. These programmes ought to be implemented in a systematic way. Information and education concerning the dangers of drugs - whether to health or to social aspects of life - together with appropriate control systems, are essential elements of the fight against drugs. Preventive action can be successful only if it is a part of an integrated programme that takes account of all aspects of the problem and its underlying causes.

The fight against drugs will be effective only if we are able to resolve the structural, social and economic factors that result in the continued supply of and demand for drugs. Drug problems are linked to various criminal activities. The growth of drug-related violent crime is alarming. The organized drug brokers are running a large-scale business. Profits obtained through illegal deals are laundered by being invested in legal business activities.

In order to keep organized drug-related crime in check, strict control and legislative measures are necessary. In addition, means are needed to tackle the structures of the narcotics trade in order to deprive this criminal business of its very foundation.

The problems related to drugs are global, cross-sectoral and ever-changing. As far as Europe is concerned, new problems seem to be arising with the changing scene. We must support the newly independent Central and Eastern European countries in their fight against drugs. We must prevent, in time, the narcotics problem from expanding. Simultaneously, we have to build a system to prevent the new flow of drugs from east to west and from west to east. To accomplish this we need cooperation across boundaries at the regional and international levels. This is, of course, true with regard to other regions as well.

It is important that issues related to narcotic drugs be discussed at the highest international level with the aim of promoting peaceful, non-discriminatory and sustainable development. In view of the global nature of the drug problem and the many issues relating to it, cooperation and good coordination are extremely important. In this respect, I would welcome an examination by the Economic and Social Council next year of the status of international cooperation within the United Nations system.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Jorge Carpizo, Attorney General of the Republic of Mexico.

Mr. CARPIZO (Mexico) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: We come to this forum of the international community in the hope that our deliberations concerning the drug phenomenon will contribute effectively to bringing peace to mankind, thanks to nations' renewed expression of their will to cooperate in the responsible and shared task of eradicating the drug trafficking and drug addiction that threaten their safety and international coexistence. The danger of drug trafficking can be summed up by saying that it is systematically destroying things of great value that have taken mankind centuries to build, such as health, freedom and justice.

Imbued with that spirit of cooperation, we have come to ratify on behalf of Mexico the decision to redouble the efforts, in the framework of international solidarity fostered by the United Nations, to fight vigorously against the crimes that derive from the various modalities of drug trafficking, to encourage actions by societies and Governments designed to reduce consumption and rates of addiction, to support preventive-education, care and treatment programmes and to stimulate scientific research and reflection in this field.

Nowadays, the most effective lesson that nations are being taught is that drugs spread when there is indecision, disorganization and lack of coordination and cooperation between Governments. In order to stand up against such negative conditions it is imperative constantly to update our knowledge of this changing phenomenon and anticipate its trends. It is urgent, in the short term, to stop its spread and, in the long term, to eradicate it through reason and law.

Mexico participates actively in international efforts being made in this respect, and within our borders we are strengthening more and more our organizational structures and programmes aimed at drug control, with strict observance of legality and based on humanitarian principles of human protection and on the juridical, organic and functional solidity of national institutions.

The Mexican State sees mankind as the reason for and inspiration of its fundamental political decisions; that is precisely why it bases its policy on drugs on the firm principle of human dignity.

In developing its public policies, the Mexican State determines its actions concerning drugs on the basis of the following principles: First, there is the principle of comprehensiveness, which consists of approaching the drug phenomenon as a whole and dealing with its basic causes and its infinite interconnections with other phenomena. Secondly, there is the principle of globality, because the problem affects all nations; therefore, in order to bring it under control, it must be approached multilaterally on the basis of shared responsibility, within a framework of full respect and cooperation, so that actions taken respond to hemispheric, regional, binational and local needs. Thirdly, there is the principle of prevention, intended, through education, to encourage critical thinking based on values capable of fostering an attitude of rejection of drugs - an attitude strengthened by the combined efforts of society and the educational and health sectors of government, and its scope of action is expanded through community mobilization programmes for drug-addiction prevention and care and rehabilitation for those who have suffered from addiction. Fourthly, there is the principle of the quality of the legal, institutional and operational instruments aimed at stopping crime in all its stages, uncovering any violation of human rights in the pursuit of criminals and providing treatment and social rehabilitation for criminals. And, fifthly, there is the principle of the active participation of society, both in the fight against drugs and in preventive programmes, and in the rejection of the drug culture and of coexistence with drugs, as well as in information strategies.

In the field of juridical-penal efforts, Mexico has achieved the following results in the last five years: More than 2,300 tons of marijuana, more than 210 tons of cocaine and almost 2 tons of heroin and opium gum have been seized. At the same time, more than 60,000 hectares of marijuana and almost 50 thousand hectares of poppies have been eradicated. We have also succeeded in dismantling more than a dozen top-level criminal organizations linked to drug trafficking and arresting 16 of their ringleaders; this has had an impact at the continental level.

Four months ago the President of Mexico created the National Institute for the Fight against Drugs, whose mission is to give this problem specialized attention. The Institute is provided with the most advanced technology to face up to this scourge.

Mexico has come before the most representative body of the international community to stress the need to consider again together, in a calm manner, the situation in which we find ourselves and to redefine our actions in the drug-control field. Only through immediate action can we achieve medium-term or long-term solutions.

In an effort to promote international action in this area, the purpose of the Mexican Government's proposal that these special meetings be held, we should like to advance some concepts and priorities that, in our opinion,

might be regarded as a basis for this exercise in international reflection.

The first is reducing demand. Since it is drug consumption that generates production and causes drug trafficking, reducing demand is the basic, albeit long-term, solution. The most effective way to reduce production and trafficking in drugs is gradually to reduce the number of consumers. In designing new international strategies we should consider developing integrated prevention programmes. Communities must be mobilized to discourage the use of substances, especially the most addictive substances, through teaching in the schools and in community education programmes, and to provide treatment based on timely identification of the problem and on the rehabilitation and social reintegration of the addict.

The second concept concerns the efficacy of international efforts to eradicate illicit cultivation. Although drugs are cultivated in many countries, whatever their degree of development, such cultivation is often concentrated in the least developed countries, where an alternative to the cultivation of illicit crops might be created through improving the living standards of those who, out of poverty, produce and trade in drugs. Such an improvement could be achieved through rural development programmes based on international cooperation for development and on the principle of shared responsibility.

This is the traditional approach. In addition, we must recognize that the so-called consumer countries are producers of drugs, illegal chemical substances and large quantities of marijuana. There should be better administrative control, and sanctions against producers and suppliers should be rigorously applied.

Thirdly, we require the harmonization of national legislation. Because the legal framework to curb drug trafficking and related crimes is inadequate, we must harmonize national laws, in keeping with each country's domestic legislation, and make them compatible with existing international instruments.

Similarly, it is essential to create new legal systems that are compatible at the international level and able to control the vast resources that drug traffickers possess, while recognizing that the huge profits play a central role in the success and spread of drug trafficking. Therefore, both the market and the large flow of funds must be eliminated as a matter of urgency. The legal systems must be able to combat the financial machinery, tax evasion and money laundering; confiscate the property of drug traffickers; eradicate the networks used for the acquisition of weapons and explosives; prevent the transport of chemical precursors to clandestine laboratories; and, lastly, control the production, transportation and distribution of drugs.

Fourthly, there is the fight against organized crime. The globalization of life in all its commercial, cultural, communication, transportation, economic and financial forms, as well as in many other aspects, has also made possible a more effective organization of criminal activities. We must therefore review and update national and international legal instruments dealing with health, penal, penal-fiscal, financial and banking matters; encourage bilateral adherence to agreements on mutual legal assistance, extradition, sentencing and money laundering; ensure the existence of adequate structures and systems of justice; and strengthen strategic information-exchange mechanisms so as to deal more effectively with transnational criminal networks.

Fifthly, new financing machinery is required to improve international cooperation. One of the obstacles to better methods of tackling the drug phenomenon is the lack of financial resources, both for the implementation of plans agreed within multilateral organizations and for national prevention and treatment and programmes to intercept drugs in transit and support rural programmes to discourage illegal cultivation. This lack of financial resources contrasts with the vast amount of capital readily available to international drug criminals, its easy transfer from one country to another and its almost complete freedom of use. If these contradictions are not resolved, it is highly unlikely that United Nations, regional and national programmes can be effective.

Multilateral credit institutions should, at the behest of the General Assembly, support existing procedures under the auspices of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to revitalize priority national programmes. It is also appropriate to make a firm but friendly appeal to the most advanced countries to increase their commitment to contribute to these goals through the Programme.

The scourge of drug trafficking must be fought with determination, appropriate strategies, the law, preventive programmes and rehabilitation programmes, better organization, technical training and perseverance. Above all, we need international cooperation. One country alone cannot overcome this great disaster. In this field, as in few others, cooperation, coordination and international solidarity, with full respect for the sovereignty of States, are indispensable.

The PRESIDENT: Before calling upon the next speaker, I should like to make some announcements.

First, I wish to express my appreciation for the cooperation of delegations in limiting their statements to 10 minutes, in accordance with the Assembly's decision in this respect. As members know, there is still a very large number of speakers inscribed on the list for both today and tomorrow, and only with the continued support and cooperation of members can we ensure the smooth discussion of this subject matter in the time allotted.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: I should now like to make an announcement in connection with an addition to our programme of work.

On Monday, 15 November, in the afternoon, the General Assembly will consider agenda item 32, "Complete withdrawal of foreign military forces from the territories of the Baltic States". The list of speakers for this item is now open.

AGENDA ITEM 112 ***(continued)***

INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL

HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY MEETINGS TO EXAMINE THE STATUS OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGAINST THE ILLICIT PRODUCTION, SALES, DEMAND, TRAFFIC AND DISTRIBUTION OF NARCOTICS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES: DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/48/L.12)

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of the United Kingdom.

Mr. RICHARDSON (United Kingdom): I should first like to convey both to you, Mr. President, and to this Assembly, the very sincere regrets of Mr. Mark Lennon-Boyd, the Minister in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office responsible for international drugs questions. He had fully intended to be here today and was much looking forward to the occasion. Unfortunately, because of a last-minute illness, he had to cancel his travels and has instead asked me to make the speech that he would have made had he been here.

At the special session of February 1990, the British Foreign Secretary described the horrendous reality of the drugs trade: the pain, misery and squalor of the addicts, the debasement of the community, the associated violence and criminality. He summed it up as the slave trade writ large. I cannot say that very much has changed.

After that meeting three years ago, the World Summit in London endorsed a reorganization of those parts of the United Nations system concerned with drugs and the adoption of a Global Programme of Action. Other international initiatives have followed. At the instigation of the leaders of the Group of 7, measures have been agreed and implemented in a number of countries to combat money-laundering and the illicit trading of precursor chemicals. Meetings of donor countries have done much to develop coordination of bilateral assistance. The Council of Europe's Pompidou Group has taken forward cooperation between the two halves of the continent. I am glad to say that the United Kingdom has been actively involved in all these initiatives.

The Minister of Justice of Belgium has set out the great strides taken internally by the European Community and its member States, but perhaps I can say a few words about that too. The Maastricht Treaty provides something brand-new: an intergovernmental pillar to deal with interior and justice matters, and another on the foreign and security policy side which operates by means of voluntary cooperation between Community member States to stand alongside the established European Community way of doing business, in which the European Commission proposes measures and the Council of Ministers decides on them. The interior and justice pillar deals with a whole range of matters, and not just drugs. But drug trafficking is one of the areas covered by this intergovernmental pillar, which is of most concern to our citizens. European Community member States, working freely together in the framework provided by this new arrangement, will cooperate, through the European Police Agency - EUROPOL - and other means to combat this scourge.

On the bilateral level, we have also sought to give practical effect to this multilateral work: we have negotiated asset seizure agreements, established operational cooperation with a wide range of countries, developed programmes of training and assistance in law enforcement, and provided expert advice on demand reduction.

Regrettably, however, the result of all these efforts has been disappointing. At a global level, the production of cocaine may have levelled off, but there are signs that even this modest achievement may not last. In the case of heroin, we cannot even claim a levelling off, as a continuing increase in supply feeds a corresponding growth in demand. One particularly pernicious aspect of this

inexorable rise in demand is a mushrooming addiction in countries where drugs are produced and through which they pass.

This somewhat bleak picture is moreover replicated in our own experience at the regional and national levels. For example, there is evidence of a significant increase in the import of cocaine into Europe, as demand elsewhere has been met. In my own country, there is a particular concern about the spread, particularly in urban areas, of the cocaine derivative known as crack.

There are wider political developments which have perversely added to the world's drug problems. The end of the cold war and the consequent liberalization of the societies and economies of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union are of course thoroughly welcome. But as old structures of law enforcement have come down before new ones have been fully established, a vacuum has been created in which drug trafficking, and indeed production, has flourished. The result has been a further diversification of an already highly diversified trade. A similar vacuum exists and is growing in parts of South-West Asia.

But the political sea change of the 1990s is not the whole story. Elsewhere too the commitment called for from the international community in 1990 has not emerged. Little progress has been made against the uncontrolled production of heroin that we have seen for many years in parts of South-East Asia. Nearly five years after its adoption, barely a half of the Member States are parties to the 1988 United Nations Convention on narcotic drugs, and some of those still lack the domestic legislation needed to fulfil its substantial obligations. Nor has nearly enough use been made of the potential of the United Nations system to tackle the drugs threat. We must all pay more than lip service to the System-Wide Action Plan. The position is the same with the Global Programme of Action. It will have meaning only if all countries play their part. It was particularly discouraging, therefore, that only 28 countries responded to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme's (UNDCP) questionnaire on implementation. As a consequence, the key document before this session, the Secretary-General's report (A/48/329), reflects the views and experiences of less than one-sixth of the membership.

This all adds up to a situation that is no less stark than it was three years ago. I have heard it said in recent weeks that we need to revamp the United Nations drug-control machinery again and create new mechanisms. I do not agree. We have the machinery; we need now to make it work better. In particular, we need a more solid international front in support of the 1988 United Nations Convention. This is an instrument with teeth, and we need to make it bite. The other half of the membership must sign up.

We also need a fuller realization of the role we have assigned to UNDCP as the focal point of international action against drugs. Although a new programme, it has shown what it can do. It deserves the fullest cooperation wherever it is engaged in front-line efforts against drugs. We should invest in development of UNDCP rather than in new initiatives. We should make sure that it has the autonomy it needs. It deserves full support more generally from institutions within and outside the United Nations system.

Within that system, and from the international financial bodies, we need a more substantial engagement of other agencies that can help. Much development activity takes place against a background of drugs production or drugs trafficking. Greater account needs to be taken of that dimension. This is as much in the interests of economic and social progress as for any narrower reason.

Elsewhere, we need to make a conscious effort to make full use of the potential of the other mechanisms. In doing so we should bear in mind the consensus reached earlier that the international effort must be properly balanced: balanced between producer, transit and consumer countries, and balanced between supply reduction, law enforcement and demand reduction. Neglect of any one of these components will erode to a disproportionate extent the overall effectiveness of the strategy to which we have committed ourselves and which these meetings will, we hope, re-endorse.

But, although international mechanisms can help, the primary responsibility for action remains with national Governments and parliaments. It is only they who can initiate action to break up drug-trafficking networks, eliminate drug production and reduce drug addiction. To do this requires courage and commitment at the highest political level, reflected down through the layers of government and administration. In practical terms, this means strengthening the law of the land to cover, for example, asset seizure, criminalization of money-laundering, and precursor-chemical control, and then enforcing the law in some cases in the face of infiltration by criminal networks into the heart of democratic institutions. If we do not have the determination to take on the powerful interests behind the drugs trade, they will

entrench their positions in our societies, to the cost of us all.

The priority of this issue cannot be in doubt. The way we tackle it has implications for future generations. The political circumstances of the 1990s give us an unprecedented opportunity to make cooperation between nations and across regions work and to create the wider united front to which I have referred. But the precondition for international success is will and effort at the national level. We owe it to each other to do what is necessary both in the global arena and at home.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Edward Lintner, National Commissioner for Narcotic Drugs and Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of the Interior of Germany.

Mr. LINTNER (Germany) *(spoke in German; English text furnished by the delegation)*: In my capacity as the German Government's Commissioner for Drug Control, I am gratified that the United Nations, by means of these four plenary meetings of the General Assembly attended by high-ranking participants, again professes its determination to proscribe drug abuse before the world's public. This is the objective we have to pursue jointly.

The Belgian Minister for Justice and Economic Affairs, Mr. Melchior Wathelet, this morning presented major aspects of the international fight against drugs, as the joint position of the European Community and its member States. Please allow me to deal with some additional issues from the viewpoint of my country.

The scope of drug-related crime has markedly increased in Germany over the past few years. In 1992 alone the German enforcement authorities seized 5.9 tons of hard drugs and more than 12 tons of cannabis products. In spite of this significant success, it is most deplorable that, as in the previous year, we had to register in 1992 more than 2,000 deaths from drug abuse. This year, there has been a 20 per cent decrease in drug-related deaths so far. However, one cannot speak of a downward trend, for there are too many factors that might influence this development. It is true that the number of first-time users of hard drugs is declining as well - above all with regard to heroin. But there is an alarming increase in first-time cocaine and amphetamine users, a development we observe with great concern.

Over the past 12 months, Germany has taken major steps designed to optimize the fight against this scourge of humanity. In addition to other legislative measures taken, money laundering was declared a punishable offence in September 1992. A Money Laundering Act was adopted last month, providing the prosecuting authorities with an essential instrument for successfully countering money laundering. The Act on the Control of Precursor Substances in the field of chemicals is about to be submitted to Parliament.

However, the emphasis of our anti-drug policy is not only on repression. We consider it our most fundamental task to convince people, especially the young, that it is better to lead a life without drugs and drug addiction in free self-determination. To this end, we have to start at an early age and appeal to those who are potentially at risk. One of our new concepts, which aims at reducing the death rate, is reaching out to drug addicts with no strings attached. A pilot programme, started in 1990, seeks to address drug addicts by means other than formal counselling and therapy, without asking them to meet any prerequisites or make advance concessions. The programme is designed to provide assistance in everyday life and end the calamitous cycle of addiction and impoverishment.

For the time being, more than 4,000 specialized places are available in long-term therapy centres. The development and extension of existing in-patient facilities for detoxification and therapy, as well as the creation of new ones, will be carried on in the future. Finally, we are continuing with other proven programmes for counselling, treatment and follow-up care, such as assistance in rehabilitation and social and vocational integration.

In the field of demand reduction, campaigns in the mass media as well as prevention activities in areas with drug problems have been successful. In particular, our drug prevention programmes at schools often entail local follow-up activities. However, it is indispensable for sustained success in reducing the demand for drugs that drug prevention is seen as a challenge to the entire society. This is why I am at present seeking to establish an association funded and run by industrial sponsors and committed social groups which will implement various and, above all, long-term action for anti-drug education programmes.

As regards measures to reduce the cultivation of narcotic drug plants - another essential element of our anti-drug policy - we primarily rely on the multifaceted instrument of development aid, which is designed to provide alternatives for earning a living other than by cultivating plants for the production of drugs. We are all well aware that a multitude of difficulties have to be

overcome before an acceptable and income-producing market will have been created for appropriate licit produce.

The formerly popular concept of crop substitution is no longer viable; it can no longer be our objective simply to substitute licit plants for illicit crops. Instead, the aim should also be to improve the social environment by means of development policy approaches, in order to reduce the acceptance of the cultivation of illicit crops.

As holds true in the field of drug problems in general, the fight against the abuse of narcotic drugs is an international task which can only be coped with through the joint responsibility of all States. The United Nations Conventions on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, the Global Programme of Action and the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control constitute a sound and comprehensive basis for drug control activities. What is needed now is a consistent implementation of these measures.

In this context let me underline the central importance of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP). Under the management of Executive Director Giacomelli, UNDCP has made encouraging progress in the various fields of international drug control. I wish to point out two focal areas to which Germany, now as before, attaches special importance: UNDCP's national master plan concept, which has been revitalized and further developed, and technical assistance for States in the field of legislation, which has been intensified. In this field particularly, the States of Central and Eastern Europe and of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) have special needs. These countries have to establish effective anti-drug legislation and enforcement authorities. This is of very special concern to us, and we would appreciate it if more States would join in and actively engage in providing assistance to this region.

We can also thank UNDCP for essential progress in sharpening the awareness that demand reduction cannot be the responsibility of the respective Governments alone but must be seen as a task to be tackled by the whole society. This means that non-governmental organizations must be increasingly involved at the national and international levels, and the same applies to other United Nations agencies in this field, such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the World Bank and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The German Government will continue to support UNDCP's important coordination function.

The German Government will complete the ratification of the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances within the next few days by depositing the instrument of ratification with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Against this background, I should like to underline that I consider it extremely important that all countries, irrespective of how they are affected by the drug problem, should also ratify this Convention.

However, appeals alone are no longer sufficient. The fight against drugs must not be fought in an overly administrative and bureaucratic manner. It is not enough to set up just another subcommittee, to keep on preparing analyses the results of which have long been known, to identify ever new ifs and buts - because the outcome of all that will be that drug control will continue to be dealt with inadequately.

The determination to combat drugs in the producer and transit countries as well as in the consumer countries must be maintained and developed. We do not want simply to stick to our repressive tools for combating illicit drugs; we are also determined to apply them in practice. Germany will therefore continue to treat dealing in illicit soft and hard drugs as a punishable criminal offence. Furthermore, our capacity to interrupt effectively the influx and trafficking routes of narcotic drugs must not be kept at the present level, but must be enhanced.

I believe that we do have a chance of reducing the drug problem. However, this will require that we attack the problem with even greater determination. To this end we must cooperate and mobilize all national and international efforts. Everybody is invited to join in.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Vitor Feytor Pinto, High Commissioner for "Project Life" - National Plan for Drug Control.

Mr. FEYTOR PINTO (Portugal) (*interpretation from French*): It is a great honour for me to represent my country as High Commissioner for "Project Life" - National Plan for Drug Control - and to address the Assembly to report on the role played by Portugal in all United Nations efforts to combat illicit trafficking in and abusive consumption of drugs.

In a society dominated by success, money and power, it is urgent to instill the values of solidarity, sharing and service, not only to combat the exploitation of the human being caused by drug trafficking but also to free all those

who have fallen victim to it and who wish, often in vain, to be able to live a life worthy of the human person.

Indeed, with regard to the drug problem, the ineffectiveness of the system of control and surveillance that has been established is giving rise to great concern on the part of the international community - hence this opportunity to evaluate results and to introduce possible adjustments into intervention strategies, so as not to dash the hopes raised at the time of its adoption by consensus in 1990.

In this regard, I am very pleased to convey Portugal's gratitude for the growing effort in this field on the part of the United Nations and the General Assembly, and to express the wholehearted support of my country for this undertaking.

This leading role - a necessity, given the complexity of the phenomenon and its truly world-wide dimensions, and a major factor in providing the cooperation required at the world and regional levels - will thus guarantee the effectiveness of measures to be adopted and encourage action by all local and national leaders who share responsibility in the vital struggle to overcome the drug problem.

With greater determination and courage the Assembly is today tackling the delicate but decisive task of evaluating the results of earlier initiatives, particularly the adoption of the Global Programme of Action and other elements in the Political Declaration approved at the seventeenth special session in 1990.

We wish here to congratulate the Secretary-General on his important report on the implementation of the Global Programme of Action by various Member States and to express our support for the recommendations contained therein.

We recognize that the drug situation throughout the world has continued to deteriorate; and we believe that it is our duty to express our admiration for and solidarity with those States that have with such determination taken bold measures in the areas of prevention and the treatment of addicts and with regard to illicit trafficking, as well as within the system of control and curbing supply.

Regionally and domestically, Portugal has striven to apply the measures in the Global Programme of Action, and we are now attempting to evaluate the extent of implementation.

Within the framework of the European Community, of which it is a member, Portugal has contributed to the elaboration of concerted strategy in the European Programme for Drug Control, which, by giving pride of place to reducing demand, is advocating the strengthening of police and customs structures, providing for cooperation and support instruments at the international level, particularly with the producer countries, and taking legislative measures to prevent the laundering of proceeds from illicit trafficking.

Inasmuch as the statement of the Belgian Minister of Justice made on behalf of the European Community has reported on the Community's achievements and strategies, I shall confine myself to endorsing wholeheartedly the views expressed therein.

Still at the regional level, within the broader framework of the Council of Europe, Portugal shares in the achievements of the Council's Pompidou Group, whose work is an important contribution to realizing measures adopted by the various countries in Europe.

In strictly domestic terms, in 1990 Portugal updated its National Drug Programme in keeping with the Global Programme of Action, and this updating dealt with legislation and control structures, including direct action.

In the legislative realm, after the ratification of the 1988 Convention, we adopted national legislation making it a crime to launder the proceeds from illicit trafficking, instituting precursor control and providing machinery for judicial cooperation.

With regard to the structures, modifications are reflected in the creation of an Inter-Ministerial Coordination Commission presided over by the Prime Minister and designed to make control much more effective.

As to direct action, we have strengthened the action models of the public services entrusted with reducing demand - health and education - and with the control of supply - police and customs - and we have enhanced the participation of community non-governmental organizations, whose work in the prevention of drug use and the treatment of addicts is now receiving increased State aid.

In such a strategy, preventing drug use among young people, which is a priority area of action, has been addressed through systematic activity focused on schools

within the educational system, with the participation of students, teachers, parents and the surrounding community.

The results have been particularly encouraging in that first-time drug use among young people within the school system has seen no increase and remains at what can be considered to be low levels - below 10 per cent for first-time use.

In the area of treatment, all efforts have been concentrated on expanding the network of assistance centres to respond to current demand. The low rate of success of available therapeutic models, the growing number of addicts seeking help and the increase of HIV carriers are causes for concern and require that greater investment in this area, immediately and in the short term, be made within the framework of the National Health System.

As to the question of the control and suppression of illicit trafficking, pressure is constantly rising owing to increased use of sea routes by traffickers - it must not be forgotten that Portugal is a port of entry into the European Community - and efforts have focused on strengthening the police and customs systems and increasing regional and international cooperation. So long as the current imbalanced conditions remain, ever-increasing means and the allocation of new though necessarily limited resources will be the only options available to us.

If the international community is to succeed in controlling the production, distribution and use of drugs by the end of this decade, it will be essential for Member States and the United Nations to redouble their efforts effectively to implement the Global Programme of Action. As for Portugal, it will pursue its efforts to implement the Programme's measures and will intensify them in the areas where intervention has proven less effective - particularly in the area of the rehabilitation and social reintegration of addicts in general and prisoners in particular, and in the realm of the prevention and suppression of illicit trafficking. It will continue its participation at the regional level in the European Community and within the Council of Europe - in the Pompidou Group - stepping up international cooperation so as best to achieve the desired goals.

For us, it is essential that the United Nations pursue its role as a mobilizer of public opinion in general and among Member States in particular by encouraging and supporting practical implementation of the Programme's measures. It is also vital that the Programme of Action be more actively pursued within the United Nations system and that it benefit from a more clear-cut contribution from the relevant organizations, particularly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Health Organization and the International Labour Organization in implementing the measures contained therein. Lastly, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme must continue to guide the work of the United Nations in this area at the operational level with the dynamism it has always shown, and it must receive the resources necessary to carry out its work.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Lee P. Brown, Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy of the United States of America.

Mr. BROWN (United States of America): It is my pleasure, on behalf of the United States, to address this Assembly on the subject of narcotics.

We have arrived here today from many corners of the globe. We come from many different nations and cultures. And yet we face a common threat: the international drug trade and the international criminal organizations involved in drug production and trafficking around the world. The threat endangers our countries, our communities, ourselves and our children, generating in its wake crime, violence, corruption, environmental degradation, social decay and immense personal misery.

Today, I would like to tell the Assembly about the nature of the drug situation we now face in the United States. On the positive side, the number of Americans who use drugs occasionally has declined markedly. In 1979, 24 million individuals had used some illicit drug at least once in the previous 30 days; last year, however, only 11.4 million did so. And the number of Americans who used cocaine on a current basis dropped from 5.8 million in 1985 to 1.3 million in 1992 - a remarkable decline of nearly 80 per cent over a seven-year period.

But other data give us cause for real concern. Drug use by hard-core users has remained essentially unchanged for the past seven years, resistant to all efforts to reduce the number of users. In fact, the use of cocaine seems to be constant or increasing. Our country's chronic users also appear to be getting sicker. New data show a 10 per cent nationwide increase in drug-related hospital visits between 1991 and 1992. There was an 18 per cent increase in hospital visits due to cocaine; heroin-related episodes showed an even more dramatic increase of 34 per cent.

The new data indicate to us that the drug epidemic that began in the late 1970s is becoming increasingly concentrated among the nation's heaviest users. Clearly,

we have a long way to go before we can claim success in our fight against drug use.

Last week, we released our response to the drug threat: the Interim National Drug Control Strategy. This Strategy has been designed to give new direction to and reinvigorate our national efforts to combat the drug problem. The Interim Strategy differs from past strategies in a number of important ways. It seeks to deter new, high levels of first-time drug use by aiming prevention programmes at high-risk populations. It targets hard-core drug users for treatment to reduce their drug use and its consequences. It emphasizes the importance of community drug- and violence-control activities. It promotes the certainty of swift, appropriate punishment for drug offenders. It supports research, and programmes that research proves to be effective.

The Strategy maintains a commitment to certain basic precepts. One is that we must continue to fight drugs comprehensively with programmes that attack both the supply of drugs to and within the United States as well as those that address our domestic drug demand. Our support for the efforts of countries that demonstrate the political will to end drug production and trafficking will continue. Another is that the possession and use of illicit drugs will remain acts subject to appropriate punishment by criminal law. The legalization or decriminalization of the use of drugs would entail more users and even more severe consequences. That is unacceptable.

In the end, our national goal remains the reduction of the overall demand for drugs in America. Our Interim Strategy will proceed along four basic tracks.

First, it concentrates on demand reduction. Its centre-piece is an aggressive drug treatment strategy with hard-core drug use as its primary target.

Secondly, it focuses on the reduction of drug-related violence and the control and prevention of crime. We will pursue a comprehensive approach to criminal violence and seek innovative solutions that can be shown to be effective, including in particular those that involve our communities.

Thirdly, it supports the empowerment of our communities. We believe it is fundamentally important to have communities resist drug trafficking and use.

Fourthly, it calls for the United States to continue international leadership in and support for international drug-control actions. We believe that the international drug trade is a direct threat to the United States, undercutting our domestic efforts to reduce drug supply and demand.

To respond to the drug threat, we will build and strengthen the enforcement and judicial institutions needed to defeat it. With regard to interdiction, the United States will focus more on efforts in the source countries, rather than on tracking and seizing drugs in transit.

Finally, we will emphasize the need to attack the drug-trafficking organizations themselves.

In short, we will use every available means to reduce drug supply and demand within the United States, and to build strong, cooperative relationships with other countries that demonstrate the will to fight drugs. A strong multilateral approach is needed if we are to get the job done.

The narcotics cartels do more than simply buy and sell drugs. They can buy and sell and terrorize Governments too. They are sophisticated, highly adaptive, multinational organizations. We must attack the narcotics cartels from strong regional and multilateral defences.

And, given the fiscal constraints that all nations face, it is imperative that we coordinate our efforts and our resources, and make the most of what we have.

Mr. Bull (Liberia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

We recognize that much has been done already, and that the foundation is in place from which to build further cooperation. The United Nations, principally through the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), but increasingly through other agencies, is a vital partner in combating the global threat. Under its Executive Director's leadership, UNDCP has become the linchpin of international drug-control efforts.

We have a responsibility to sustain the high-level international commitment and resources for drug control on both national and international levels. My own Government believes in action, not just words; and therefore we are doubling our 1993 contribution to UNDCP: our 1993 contribution is $6.2 million.

There is an increasingly important need for a strong United Nations system. The United Nations agencies with related responsibilities cannot ignore the impact of narcotics production, trafficking and use. The United Nations is not just a peace-keeping or peacemaking body: it also is a forum for calling attention to the enemies of

democracy and calling for action against them. Let us make it an effective forum.

I ask several things of this series of meetings: first, that we leave here today resolved to condemn international drug trafficking, to seek full ratification of the 1988 Vienna Convention, and to go beyond that to help all nations enact the legislation and develop the institutions that will achieve the Convention's goals; secondly, that we intensify the attack on the trafficking organizations by targeting our efforts at the kingpins that head them; thirdly, that we urge increased emphasis on targeting the profits and the money-laundering operations of traffickers, developing and executing effective uniform maritime interdiction procedures, and enforcing chemical controls; fourthly, that we resolve to intensify our multilateral and regional approaches, to share our resources and to coordinate our assistance; and, finally, that all Governments resolve to support efforts further to strengthen the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control. The scope of the drug problem is so vast that we must energize the entire United Nations system. We must also urge the international financial institutions to play a greater role in stopping the drug trade.

In this post-cold-war era, our countries are no longer haunted by the threat of nuclear destruction. And yet this is no time for complacency. With the end of the cold war, the security of nations is threatened by other insidious and powerful enemies of democracy and freedom. Narcotics trafficking and other global crimes corrupt and undermine the basic institutions that underpin democracy and promote political freedom: the rule of law and free and open economies.

The United States will not shrink from its leadership role in the attack against international drug and crime syndicates. We call upon the community of nations to stand up to this threat collectively.

With the international community's renewed and sustained commitment to the rule of law, we will prevail. Indeed, as this is an issue of simple responsibility - to ourselves and to our children - we have no other choice.

The PRESIDENT: I call next on His Excellency Mr. Shozo Azuma, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan.

Mr. AZUMA (Japan): I wish first of all, on behalf of the Government and the people of Japan, to convey my heartfelt congratulations to Ambassador Insanally, who is carrying out the important task of presiding over the General Assembly at this session, including these plenary meetings of the Assembly that have been convened to consider the question of narcotic drugs. I am confident that his wealth of experience and his keen insight will ensure that these will be very productive meetings. For its part, the Japanese delegation will be unstinting in its cooperation as Ambassador Insanally carries out his solemn responsibilities.

(spoke in Spanish)

Today narcotic drugs are found in all parts of the world and are therefore a worldwide problem, threatening the health and well-being of people everywhere. In recent years, the number of drug addicts has been rising rapidly in the producing countries, the transit countries, and the consuming countries alike. This gives rise to a very serious situation that puts down deep roots in the lives of people. The problems of narcotic drugs cannot be solved by one country, whether it be a producing, consuming or transit country; the problems are universal, and if an effective solution is to be found the participation of all countries in the quest for a solution is required. In order to build a new international community in this post-cold-war era that can enable us to strengthen the foundations of peace, we must give greater importance to promoting international cooperation to solve the drug problem.

In that connection, the Global Programme of Action adopted at the special session of the General Assembly held in 1990, devoted to the question of narcotic drugs, is important and significant, for it provides a common base for such an international effort. It is the duty of each State Member of the United Nations to do its best to implement the Programme.

Japan understands how important it is for Member States to strengthen balanced measures against narcotic drugs in the areas of law enforcement and reduction of supply and demand. For this reason, Japan has exerted every effort to make the adjustments in its legal system necessary to implement the Global Programme of Action.

In October 1991 the Government of Japan passed two laws to facilitate ratification of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which was adopted in December 1988. In June 1992 Japan duly ratified the Convention. Since that time, with the help of its dedicated law enforcement authorities, Japan has proceeded steadily to implement the provisions of the Convention.

Further, this year as part of the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse, which is one of the proposals embodied in the Global Programme of Action, Japan launched an education and public information campaign called: "No, absolutely No!". Japan is also actively participating in the United Nations fund campaign against drugs in order to contribute to non-governmental organizations that have undertaken programmes in this area.

Although Japan has been relatively fortunate in the extent of its drug problem, in recent years the smuggling of cocaine into the country from Latin America is a cause of growing concern. If international trafficking in drugs is to be controlled more effectively, Japan recognizes that each country must not only pursue greater efforts to interdict such traffic at the point of entry but also contribute to international efforts to stem illegal drug activities in the producing and transit countries. From this perspective, I sincerely urge all Member States to promote the implementation of the Global Programme of Action and thereby strengthen international cooperation.

Japan considers that it is imperative to establish an effective international cooperation system through which the international community as a whole can combat this drug menace and, for its part, Japan is prepared to continue to contribute to this endeavour commensurate with its status in the world community.

To achieve the aims of the Global Programme of Action, Japan is also pursuing other measures.

First, it will share its experience and expertise in the area of drug control with other nations. As it believes that human resources development in the area of law enforcement is particularly important effectively to control illegal drug-related activities, Japan has invited people in this area from all regions of the world to participate in seminars in Japan on the handling of drug-related offences and will continue to do so in the future.

Secondly, Japan has recognized that it is necessary to strengthen the support it provides to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), which, as the organization responsible for drug control activities within the United Nations system and the international community, has played such an important role in the war against drugs. Japan has strengthened its support for this Programme.

In this regard, considering the importance of taking effective action at the subregional level, Japan advocated the formation of a subregional centre for drug control at the Tokyo Meeting of Senior Officials on Drug Abuse Issues in Asia and the Pacific held in February 1991. As a result, the UNDCP Regional Centre duly commenced operation in Bangkok in March last year. This Centre has already contributed, for example, to the creation of a subregional strategy to coordinate anti-drug activities in the area known as the Golden Triangle and in China by helping to secure the signatures of the Governments of Thailand, Myanmar and China on bilateral agreements relating to the control of drugs. Japan will continue to support the UNDCP, including this Regional Centre.

Thirdly, Japan believes that economic and social development is indispensable to reduce the supply of drugs from the producing countries, and it has, accordingly, extended support for development programmes related to achieving a supply reduction in areas such as Asia and Latin America. Japan will continue to contribute to efforts to strengthen alternative development programmes in the producing countries so as to improve the economic and social environment and lessen their dependence on drug production.

I should now like to suggest several measures that Member States might take to turn the tide against illegal drug trafficking.

First, in concert with the non-governmental organizations, we must strengthen our efforts to reduce demand through education and public information activities against drug abuse. In recent years drug use has increased not only in the consuming countries but also in the producing and transit countries, and a strengthening of such education and public information activities is vital. Japan believes that government-related activities are not sufficient, and it considers collaboration with the private sector indispensable. In fact, the educational campaign called "No, absolutely No!", to which I referred earlier, was launched and sponsored by the Drug Abuse Prevention Centre, a Japanese non-governmental organization. This campaign has proven to be very successful, thanks to the support of this non-governmental organization and the public. In like manner, Japan urges the Governments of all Member States to mobilize their resources and those of their non-governmental organizations to mount stronger and even more effective campaigns.

Secondly, a subregional approach, which I cited a moment ago, should be pursued, with UNDCP regional centres established around the globe. Our anti-drug struggle, particularly if it is to be fought within regions that also encompass producing and transit countries,

requires not only the individual efforts of each State but also the cooperation of neighbouring States with common borders. If we are to make progress in this area, each Member State must promote such subregional and regional cooperation, including the establishment of UNDCP regional centres, as we have done in South-East Asia.

Thirdly, I should like to emphasize the need for improved communication and closer consultation and cooperation between the Member States. At present, the only global policy-making forum on narcotic drugs in which Member States participate is the annual session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Japan therefore suggests that the role of this Commission as a policy-making body be strengthened through the establishment of an ad hoc group of narcotic-control experts to guide us with their valuable knowledge.

Fourthly, we need to build a stronger international base from which to prosecute our war against narcotic-drug abuse and illicit trafficking. The ratification and implementation of the 1988 United Nations Convention is not proceeding as it should. This is due, in large part, to defects in the regulatory systems of certain countries. Japan therefore urges all Member States that have not yet done so to make every effort to adopt and implement a national regulatory system and then to ratify the Convention so that better progress may be made towards achieving our common goal. I hope that we shall be able to make great and speedy progress in our endeavours to solve this problem.

These plenary meetings provide us with a unique opportunity to discuss the implementation of the Global Programme of Action and to formulate real measures that we are willing to pursue together. My delegation hopes that we shall achieve this goal and, in so doing, reaffirm our determination to gain the upper hand in our struggle against three evils: the illicit production of, trafficking in and abuse of narcotic drugs.

The PRESIDENT: I now call Mr. Chandrashekara Murthy, Minister of State for Finance of the Government of India.

Mr. MURTHY (India): I am pleased to participate in these high-level plenary meetings of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly to examine the status of international cooperation against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances. The purpose of the meetings is to address comprehensively the global menace of drug abuse and its consequences. India has been a victim not only of traders, who have used it as a transit route for drugs from the Golden Crescent and the Golden Triangle, but also of recent virulent forms of the drug menace, such as narco-terrorism. International cooperation in this area is imperative, as the problem is global and demands global solutions.

The Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Global Plan of Action is a comprehensive guide for action by Member States. My delegation endorses the recommendations therein - particularly those relating to licit production, the tackling of precursors, multilateral and regional arrangements and measures to deal with terrorist and insurgent groups.

India is a party to all the international Conventions on drug- abuse prevention. We are also a party to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1990 - a regional Convention on the subject, which came into force in 1993. We cannot overemphasize the need to check the drug menace, as it undermines the very foundations of organized society. While it may be easy to criticize those who fall victim to drug abuse, it is even more important to deal with the people and organizations that make it possible for drugs to be peddled across the globe to satisfy their base instincts and their lust for profit. It is significant that evidence of the close nexus between narcotics, gun-running and terrorism is surfacing. Unless there is a determined effort on the part of countries, irrespective of political ideologies and differences, this menace cannot be tackled effectively. I therefore give an assurance that India will spare no effort in extending to the international community full cooperation in all possible steps to enforce the United Nations Conventions.

The Government of India, in pursuance of the United Nations General Assembly's resolution S-17/2 of 23 February 1990 and the Global Programme of Action, has undertaken a series of measures to implement the relevant recommendations. In order to eradicate the illicit production of narcotic drugs, a country-wide action plan has been formulated, and appropriate instructions have been issued to all law-enforcement agencies under the Federal and state Governments. We are making vigorous efforts to identify and destroy drugs being illicitly cultivated.

In order to ensure total safety for the licit production of opium, a number of measures have been taken in the current year to prevent leakage. The Government has increased the average yield to be tendered by farmers. The cooperation of agriculture universities has been enlisted.

They are to conduct scientific experiments, in fields selected at random, for the purpose of estimating average yield with a view to determining the level up to which the Government should insist that farmers must tender. It has also been decided that the number of points for the transfer of opium after its collection should be reduced.

Modern methods of storage and transport are being employed for the purpose of eliminating leakage while opium is in the process of transit and transfer. Scientific instruments are being designed and developed so that the moisture content of opium may be determined, and its weight accurately measured, actually in the farmer's field. It is expected that these instruments will be commissioned during the ensuing crop season. We have also decided to strengthen the security measures that are taken during the extraction season in all opium-growing areas of the country, to prevent traffickers from exploiting innocent farmers. The Narcotics Control Bureau will be turned into a strike force to intercept drug traffickers within the country and those coming from outside. We are also cooperating closely with certain affected countries for the purpose of joint detection of the kingpins of drug trafficking.

The Government has also solicited the cooperation of industry to prevent the misuse of precursor chemicals. The Narcotics Control Bureau has advised every producer individually of the international responsibility to ensure that these precursor chemicals are sold only to authorized persons. Similarly, the assistance of the chambers of commerce and industry has been sought. They have been asked to give their members advice about ensuring the safety of chemicals and about their proper sale to authorized persons. My Government is taking steps to amend and make more stringent the laws governing confiscation and forfeiture of property of people involved with narcotic drugs. We hope that the series of preventive measures that have been taken recently by the Government and the close cooperation we are maintaining with affected countries will result in an effective check on the spread of the narcotics menace.

Recently, we have also been holding bilateral discussions with neighbouring countries, and I am happy to inform the Assembly that these meetings have produced an excellent response by way of close cooperation in this area. We have entered into bilateral agreements with several countries, and negotiations with 10 others, with a view to concluding such bilateral agreements, are in progress.

In the social sector, we have formulated a three-point strategy comprising awareness-building, community-based rehabilitation and the training of functionaries. A quick survey in 33 Indian cities has revealed easy availability, an increasing variety of drugs, increasing use of intravenous syringes and the spread of HIV linked to the use of infected needles. The number of registered addicts has risen at an alarming rate. While the regulatory and suppressive measures have shown increasing efficiency, more emphasis must be placed on the question of demand reduction.

We have mounted a continuous multi-media barrage, and considerable awareness of the evil effects of drug addiction has been generated. We recognized from the start that the success of drug-abuse prevention schemes depended on community-based rehabilitation and the association of voluntary organizations. We have 254 counselling, de-addiction and after-care centres, all run by non-governmental organizations. Under our programme of training professionals, 4,400 doctors, paramedics, social workers, police and prison officials have been given orientation in drug-abuse and prevention programmes.

We have increased the allocations for these programmes fourfold during the last two years. Substantially higher allocations will be required for tackling the problem adequately in the future. UNDCP's assistance has been useful, and there is a need to increase the assistance to cover the establishment of de-addiction and rehabilitation centres. I should like to pay a tribute to the efforts of UNDCP for recommending bold and pragmatic measures to fight the drug menace and for making recommendations for harmonizing national legislations in this regard.

In conclusion, I should like to take this opportunity to reaffirm my country's strong determination to combat, with the cooperation of the international community, this scourge of drug abuse and the menace of drug trafficking. We should also like to express our appreciation to those who have taken the initiative to negotiate a comprehensive draft resolution to be adopted at the conclusion of these high-level plenary meetings. I trust that the measures identified in the draft resolution will facilitate effective international cooperation in dealing with drug abuse and related problems.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Aad Kosto, State Secretary, Ministry of Justice, of the Netherlands.

Mr. KOSTO (Netherlands): There is every reason for the problem of drugs to be high on the agenda of the

General Assembly of the United Nations. Drug trafficking and drug use are undermining internal order in numerous countries throughout the world, and international criminal organizations use methods which constitute a direct threat to liberty and the rule of law for the people of the States represented here. The Netherlands Government believes international cooperation is necessary to reduce both the supply of and the demand for drugs and to destroy the criminal networks which traffic in drugs. I should like to take this opportunity to outline a number of new initiatives taken by my Government in this area.

I should also like, on behalf of the Government of the Netherlands, to express my great respect for the major contribution to efforts to combat drug use and drug trafficking made in recent years by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), led by Mr. Giacomelli, its Executive Director. May I also pay tribute to the role played in this work by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs as the relevant policy-making body.

The Conventions concluded within the framework of the United Nations, together with the Global Programme of Action and the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan, form a comprehensive framework for drug-control activities on the part of Member States and international organizations. It therefore gives me great pleasure to be able to state that the Netherlands recently acceded to the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the 1988 Vienna Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. In other words, the Netherlands is now bound by all the relevant United Nations Conventions.

I would also draw attention to the introduction by the UNDCP of master plans which form the basis for the implementation of its projects and programmes. The essential element of such plans is a multidisciplinary approach, both to reducing trafficking and supply and demand and to social and development problems at the regional and subregional level. This has led to significant improvements in the way in which the drug problem is tackled in a wider context.

One example is the important role assigned by the Dublin Group to the UNDCP in the Task Force on coordination of drug control assistance to Eastern Europe, not only in coordinating activities in the various countries of Eastern Europe but also in formulating recommendations and priorities for the various regions.

The Netherlands is aware of the problems that drug abuse, illicit drug production and trafficking create for developing countries. In some countries the drug issue even threatens to impede normal and sustainable development. We recognize that the drug problem forms part of a complex set of forces that may include social, economic and even cultural elements. We also believe that isolated efforts that do not take all these elements into account are doomed to fail. The development of an integrated strategy is therefore needed to eliminate illicit drug production, as well as trafficking and demand.

The Netherlands has previously committed itself to UNDCP programmes in Pakistan, Colombia, Bolivia, Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles.

Despite all these estimable initiatives, we in the international community must, of course, never lose our critical attitude. We must continue to seek ways of eliminating the weaknesses in the system. To this end, the Netherlands supports proposals, on the one hand, to request the Economic and Social Council to examine the status of international cooperation within the United Nations system in order to recommend ways and means of improving such cooperation and, on the other, to ask the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, with the support of the UNDCP and in collaboration with the International Narcotics Control Board, to monitor and evaluate action at the national and international level to implement international drug-control instruments, with a view to identifying areas of satisfactory progress and areas of weakness and to recommend appropriate adjustments to drug-control activities wherever required.

The central aim here is the evaluation of the implementation of international conventions and the resolutions adopted in recent years. It is essential that the master plans drawn up by the UNDCP be included in this process so that it can be established whether the recommendations made in the plans are being carried out at the regional level.

We in the Netherlands, like those in other countries, are fully aware of the need for critical monitoring to determine whether the objectives of drug policy are being achieved in practice and whether parts of the policy require amendment. The Dutch Government established the principles of its drug-abuse policy in 1976. The reduction of demand for drugs is a basic goal of that policy. Over the years, we have constantly striven to integrate demand reduction into our education, health and social-services systems.

The facilities provided are nationwide and are available to all drug addicts. The various services

involved, such as the police, the judiciary and the social services, work together within our integrated-policy approach in a manner which I would venture to describe as excellent. Plans to expand the provision of treatment, particularly for problem addicts who cause trouble in our cities, are now being prepared. I need hardly point out the close connection between addiction and crime, given the fact that a large proportion of the prison population are drug addicts. The Government and Parliament of the Netherlands therefore believe that coercive policy within the judicial system should be tightened.

In addition, however, international drug traffickers have become more professional over the past few years, and the Netherlands is among the countries that have devised appropriate responses to professional crime. A large-scale reorganization of the police force has taken place in the interests of greater efficiency and improved cooperation between the various investigative services. One very important point I should like to mention is the recent enactment of legislation expanding the scope for investigating organized crime. The Acts of Parliament to which I refer cover the seizure of assets purchased with the proceeds of crime, the combating of money laundering, the interception of telecommunications and the protection of witnesses. They have increased our potential for striking at the heart of organized drug crime. It is not enough to arrest couriers and other minor figures: we must direct our efforts at the key figures of criminal organizations. The new approach by the Dutch police and judicial authorities has already led to a number of successes.

Investigations reveal trails leading to other countries, and that is why international cooperation in this area is vital. Scope for such cooperation should be increased by a number of recent conventions, chief among which - in addition to the 1988 Vienna Convention - is the 1990 Strasbourg Convention on laundering, tracing, seizure and confiscation of the proceeds of crime. The Netherlands has not only ratified those Conventions but has also incorporated them into national legislation. It is now possible under Dutch law, therefore, to use financial means to tackle organized crime and to seize all illegally obtained advantage on behalf of the State. A number of ongoing investigations have yielded their first results and have led to major drugs hauls and the seizure of large sums of money and quantities of goods.

The Netherlands is lending its assistance to the drafting of similar legislation in the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba and has signed a treaty with the United States, which will enter into force throughout the Kingdom as a whole, aimed at improving cooperation between our countries, with provision for the sharing of assets. The Netherlands and the United Kingdom recently signed a bilateral treaty which builds upon the European conventions in this field. Cooperation in practical matters with our immediate neighbours in Belgium, Germany, France and Luxembourg is being stepped up to a significant degree.

However, the Netherlands has not only set its sights on combating the international drug trade. Our "coffee-shop policy", as it is called, derived from the belief that it would be the least of all evils if in-house dealers, who were tolerated and monitored, helped to ensure that users of small quantities of soft drugs never came into contact with such hard drugs as heroin and cocaine, which have much more serious effects on a person's health. However, this original objective has been obscured by the sharp increase in the number of such coffee shops. As more and more coffee shops have opened for business in certain cities, they have attracted more and more customers, mainly from abroad. This has to be stopped. Once the number of coffee shops has been reduced - and the Dutch judicial authorities are actively pursuing such a policy as I speak - the distortion of the original objectives will come to an end, and with it the drug tourism.

The Schengen Agreement affords excellent opportunities for us to join forces with neighbouring countries in Europe to combat drug tourism. Indeed, joint action is the key to all efforts to stop drug trafficking. Within the European Community, therefore, the Netherlands is a firm advocate of facilitating extradition procedures and the exchange of information. EUROPOL, which is to be responsible for pooling resources in Europe, is another indispensable element in efforts to tackle the international drug trade.

Nevertheless, we in Europe must not forget the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to the drug problem. The important thing is to reduce demand as well as supply. The establishment of the European Drug Monitoring Centre could lay the basis for this process by disseminating information on the treatment of drug addicts within Europe and hence improving their treatment.

I should therefore like to conclude by stressing once again that cooperation at the European Community level, together with the know-how possessed by the United Nations drug-control agencies in Vienna, is essential if we are to tackle the drug problem. My Government is always available for such cooperation.

The PRESIDENT: I now call upon Mr. Kyung-Shik Joo, Vice-Minister of Health and Social Affairs of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. JOO (Republic of Korea): I have the honour to make a few remarks concerning international drug control, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Korea.

No one doubts that the unabating situation of drug abuse and illicit trafficking remains a major concern in today's world. Despite the whole framework for international cooperation and a wide range of efforts by the international community, an increasing number of people are still languishing under the yoke of drug abuse. Large quantities of chemicals have been illicitly diverted to the unlawful manufacture of drugs, and new forms of illicit drugs have been developed. Trafficking methods are becoming increasingly complicated and diverse.

While the end of East-West confrontation has provided a rare opportunity for prosperity, the accompanying political and economic upheavals in various parts of the world have also provided new opportunities for illicit traffickers, enabling them to penetrate regional boundaries more easily. Criminal drug organizations can effectively expand their areas of operation, entering into collusion with other international criminal groups such as illegal arms dealers and terrorists. This certainly poses a formidable threat to the security of the international community. The global situation of drug abuse remains grim. Drug-producing countries are still producers. Consumer countries remain consumers. There is a proliferation of the number of transit countries. Moreover, illegal drug-trafficking organizations have ruthlessly contaminated transit areas.

No single formula based on supply and demand can effectively cure this pernicious disease. It is also obvious that the threat of drug abuse and illicit trafficking cannot be effectively eliminated by the efforts of a single country. Illicit traffickers have demonstrated their ability to adapt to changing circumstances. In this regard, the firm will and determination of Governments to do the job properly and cooperation between Governments at the regional and international level are required.

Our frustration easily leads us to accept that widespread drug abuse is an incurable disease, with an unbelievable ability to transform itself constantly and immediately, making medicines or vaccines ineffective and useless against it. However, drug abuse is curable if we use the right medicines or vaccines. For this reason, we are compelled to review the strategies and policies that have been adopted to fight drug abuse.

The blueprint for drug abuse control was presented in the forms of the Global Programme of Action, the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future activities in Drug Abuse Control and the System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control. They provide a very comprehensive framework for effective measures to control drug abuse.

The commitment of the international community to eliminate drug abuse has also been clearly demonstrated by the conclusion of the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Many States have become party to the international drug control treaties, and even non-party States have endeavoured to implement the treaties' terms.

The principle of shared responsibility is now widely accepted by the international community, as the scope of international cooperation expands to include various aspects of the drug problem. In particular, approaches such as the introduction of a drug dimension into the lending and programming policy of international financial institutions and into the financing of alternative development activities rightly reflect the perception of the international community that the drug problem cannot be solved by narrowly focusing on its socio-pathological aspect and that we need a multidisciplinary approach duly taking into account social, cultural and economic factors in order to ensure a truly drug-free world.

What, then, have we missed? We may simply blame the multilateral systems for the worsening situation. Or we may use the excuse that international drug-control treaties have become too rigid to reflect rapidly changing realities. Still, we cannot escape the fact that the victims of drug abuse are our own people - our own neighbours and our own children.

We believe that international cooperation has been carried out very staunchly and systematically. What we need most at this juncture is to shake off our chronic sense of helplessness. We should once again muster our wisdom and revitalize our commitment. We should demonstrate our willingness to implement what we have agreed upon.

The situation in the Republic of Korea has greatly improved following intensified interventions to reverse the growing trend towards drug abuse. My country has made

great progress in eradicating the manufacture of methamphetamine through a continued crackdown on the manufacture of illicit drugs and through awareness campaigns.

In early 1989 methamphetamine produced in Korea accounted for 70 per cent to 90 per cent of the volume of methamphetamine smuggled into Japan. By the end of that year the percentage had plunged to 12 per cent, and no smuggling of methamphetamine from the Republic of Korea has since been detected. The Global Programme of Action has served as a model framework for my Government in waging the war against drug abuse. The Government of the Republic of Korea has adopted a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach. Policy tools have ranged from a forceful clamp-down on the manufacture, supply and trafficking of illicit drugs, through public-awareness campaigns to reduce the demand for illicit drugs, to the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts. As a result of these multisectoral efforts, the number of those perpetrating drug-related offences has substantially decreased.

My country, aware of the urgency of bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the fight against drug abuse, has actively joined the efforts of the international community aimed at combating drug abuse and illicit trafficking. For instance, the Republic of Korea has collaborated with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP)in the latter's Goodwill Ambassadors initiative, which was formally launched as part of the activities of the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse, in 1992, with the appointment of the Chung Trio as the first anti-drug ambassadors.

In the Republic of Korea, the Goodwill Ambassador events received nationwide coverage by the media, thus successfully disseminating the information that drug abuse can threaten the future of mankind. In this context, my delegation wishes to recall General Assembly resolution 47/102, which called upon Governments to cooperate with UNDCP in expanding the Goodwill Ambassadors initiative to combat drug abuse.

The Republic of Korea, as a party to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, has stepped up its efforts to harmonize its national legislation with the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances to make possible early adherence to the Convention.

In an effort to provisionally apply Article 12 of the 1988 United Nations Convention, the Government of the Republic of Korea has prepared legislative measures to prevent 22 listed chemicals from being diverted into illicit drug manufacturing, by requiring drug manufacturers and traders to keep records of all transactions.

In addition, a draft statute concerning asset forfeiture and controlled delivery is being prepared. With respect to money laundering, the Government in August introduced new legislation that requires all financial transactions to be conducted in the transactor's real name. This legislation will make money laundering virtually impossible.

In connection with international cooperation to combat illicit trafficking of drugs, the Republic of Korea hosted the eighteenth meeting of the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies in Asia and the Pacific region, from 13 to 17 September this year, in Seoul. The discussions at the meeting were very lively, and the exchange of views and experiences among participants was extremely useful and informative.

We should not tolerate the current grim situation with respect to the abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. If this worsening trend is not stopped now, the future of the human race will be in grave danger. I firmly believe that only a common response and a reaffirmed commitment to act at the national, regional and international levels can guarantee a drug-free world.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Christo Koulishev, Deputy Minister of Finance of Bulgaria.

Mr. KOULISHEV (Bulgaria) *(interpretation from Russian)*: The dramatic increase in illicit activities related to narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, threatening the well-being of the individual and of society as a whole, is becoming one of the most urgent international issues of global significance.

The magnitude of this rising trend requires a prompt and adequate response from the international community through the relevant United Nations bodies, which have already proved to be efficient in combating drugs.

The decision taken by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session to dedicate two days of high-level plenary meetings to an urgent examination of the status of international cooperation against drugs re-emphasized the concern and responsibility of the United Nations in this regard. Recognizing the leading role of the United Nations

in providing policy guidance in the fight against drugs, the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria considers its own participation in international cooperation against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances a matter of priority for two reasons: firstly, the geographical position of Bulgaria at the natural crossroads between Europe and the Middle East and the current economic difficulties facing the country in its transition to a market economy, which heighten the risk of an increase in drug-related criminal activities within the country, worsening the situation not only inside but outside its borders; and secondly, our awareness that efficient and comprehensive drug control is beyond the power of a single State and that adequate coordination at the regional and international levels is necessary.

Fully aware of the negative impact of this social scourge, Bulgaria was among the first countries to sign and ratify the existing international legal instruments in the field of drugs. The 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances entered into force for Bulgaria in December 1992. This year, Bulgaria acceded to the Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime. With the support of the Legal Affairs Division of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), the Bulgarian authorities have embarked upon the process of bringing national legislation into line with these Conventions.

Bulgaria attaches great importance to the improvement of the national capacity for facing drug-related problems, which it considers a prerequisite for successful international cooperation. In July 1993, the Government set up an Interministerial Committee as the administrative structure for coordinating the activities of all State bodies involved in drug prevention and control. The Committee will implement the national strategy and master plan in combating drugs.

In 1991, the Bulgarian Government created a special branch of the police service at the Ministry of the Interior for combating organized crime. The branch has operational links with INTERPOL and other national agencies. Technical assistance, including equipment and training, especially for law enforcement agencies, is considered to be of paramount importance for the building of national capacity and the strengthening of control on the borders and within the national territory. We hope that fruitful cooperation with the bilateral donors and UNDCP in this sphere will be further developed and will be of mutual benefit. We welcome the creation of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control and we hope it will contribute to the successful implementation of the Global Programme of action.

We highly appreciate the positive role of the International Narcotics Control Board as an independent organ for observing the application of the international Conventions on drugs. In June 1993, an expert mission from the Board visited Bulgaria and provided assistance in identifying and eliminating some deficiencies in our drug-combating policy and related operational activities. We hope that cooperation with the Board will continue because it is of mutual interest.

For the time being, transit trafficking remains Bulgaria's major drug-related problem. As further evidence of this, the main seizures of narcotics made by the Bulgarian Customs authorities have taken place at the borders of the country. Last year the authorities made 36 seizures of smuggled narcotics, for a total amount of 246 kilograms; 28 of those seizures were of heroin, amounting to a total of 159 kilograms. From 1 January to 21 October of this year, the Customs authorities have made 46 seizures of illicit narcotics, amounting to a total of 460 kilograms, among which were 40 seizures of heroine with a total amount of 457 kilograms.

According to the statistics of the Zollkriminalamt in Cologne, Germany, the Bulgarian Customs administration occupies first place in amounts of heroin seized along the Balkan route. Despite the fact that new diversionary branches of the Balkan route are being created, according to the available United Nations data, about 70 per cent of the illicit trafficking in heroin to the target countries, mainly in Western Europe, is being carried out through the classic Balkan route. Once again, this underscores the crucial importance of control of the Bulgarian southern border.

The war in former Yugoslavia and the embargo imposed on that country have forced most of the transportation vehicles to move in the direction of our northern border on the Danube river, where the first 13 seizures of smuggled narcotics have been made. Along with that development has come the initial process of establishing a domestic illicit market for psychotropic substances. Moreover, heroine is expected gradually to replace the traditionally used psychotropic substance on the market. The last two years have seen individual cases of illegal cultivation of opium poppy and cannabis.

During the first two quarters of this year, the specially established Central Office seized two illegal laboratories for the production of amphetamines, located deep within the country. Seizures have been made of 11 kilograms of amphetamines, 7 kilograms of phenitiline, 3.5 kilograms of phenobarbital, 3.1 kilograms of codeine, 154 litres of benzyl-methyl-ceton, 9 kilograms of heroin and 4 kilograms of opium.

The Republic of Bulgaria attaches particular importance to the international cooperation in the field of the control of narcotics and psychotropic substances. The participation of the Bulgarian Customs authorities in international efforts to stop the trafficking in narcotics began in 1969. The Police and Customs authorities have signed or will be signing bilateral agreements for cooperation with many European countries and the United States of America.

It is clear that illicit activities connected with narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances are directly linked with economic and social conditions in the counties affected by them. The economic liberalization and privatization of the pharmaceutical industry which are part of economies in transition contribute to the development of negative trends in the field of control, including the precursor control. The continuing traffic results in the dissemination of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, which in turn means the creation of national illicit markets and increases in illicit demand, trade and distribution. Drug abuse could become a significant medical and social problem which will adversely affect Bulgarian society. Taking into account the considerable drop in the gross domestic product during the past three years and the rise in unemployment resulting from the readjustment of the national economy, the losses sustained by Bulgaria from strict implementation of United Nations sanctions against former Yugoslavia and the heavy burden of the foreign debt, it is obvious that the State possesses limited funds and means for dealing with the situation with respect to drugs.

In this regard the understanding and assistance of the international community and most donors in helping us face up to specific economic problems in countries with economies in transition, especially those of them economically affected by the application of the United Nations sanctions against former Yugoslavia, should help them to tackle with the drug-related problems in a more appropriate way.

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 3208 (XXIX) of 11 October 1974, I now call on the Commissioner of the European Community, Mr. Padraig Flynn.

Mr. FLYNN (European Community): In his capacity as Chairman of the European Community's Council of Ministers, my distinguished friend Minister Wathelet has indicated to the Assembly how seriously the European Community and its Member States regard the drug problem. As the Member of the European Commission responsible for drugs policy, I have the honour and the privilege of describing to the Assembly the role and the activities of the European Community in fighting this plague in our societies.

Never before, in all of history, has there been such a seeping sense of helplessness, such a sense that any action can be subverted, any process eroded, any campaign vitiated by the forces of evil. The European Community is well aware of this, and more.

The European Community has long recognized the particular responsibilities of industrialized countries and regions in this fight. The Community has also been increasingly conscious of the extent to which the dynamics of European integration, the creation of a single market without internal frontiers and the decisive steps we are taking towards European union present us with new challenges. The initiatives taken at Community level indicate the seriousness with which the Community views the drug problem and the growing recognition within the Community of the need to take action at that level.

The Community also knows that the European ideal of peace and prosperity requires substantial, real and measurable progress to be made in this fight. The more important of the actions to that end in recent years include: the creation in 1989 of the European Committee to Combat Drugs (CELAD), bringing together National Drug Coordinators from each member State and the Commission; the subsequent adoption by the Council of Ministers of the European Community meeting in Rome in 1990 of the first European Plan to combat drugs, which provides a comprehensive framework for measures in the field of demand reduction, law enforcement and international cooperation and which was updated at the Edinburgh meeting of the Council of Ministers of the European Community last December; the ratification by the Community - the only regional economic organization to have done so - of the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances; the adoption at Community level of legislative measures governing trade in precursors both within the Community and with third countries; the adoption of a

Directive on money laundering and a Regulation providing for the establishment of a European Monitoring Centre for Drug Abuse as a result of Commission proposals; the organization of the first European Drug Prevention Week in 1992, involving the widespread participation of both governmental and non-governmental organizations throughout the Community.

This is a world-wide problem. It is a threat that speaks all languages, a commerce that accepts all currency, a killer which makes no distinction of race, creed or nationality; and it can be fought only through cooperation, intensified coordination and international solidarity. Recognizing this, we have long believed that the United Nations provides a necessary focal point in the global fight against all aspects of illicit drugs. We reaffirm the importance we attach to the role of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) in providing coordination and effective leadership for all United Nations drug-control activities, and we are glad to acknowledge its achievements. I am particularly pleased, therefore, to note that the excellent working relationships which exist between the Commission and the UNDCP were strengthened earlier this year by the conclusion of a liaison agreement. When the European Community talks about solidarity and cooperation, we do not mean it in an empty or a passive way.

Within the framework of the Group of 7, the Community and its member States have played an important part in the establishment and subsequent work of the Chemical Action Task Force. The Community also participates actively in the Financial Action Task Force.

The North-South cooperation programme of the European Community is directed to supporting the efforts of developing countries to reduce demand largely through prevention measures. Community support has been provided to Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru through alternative development projects and trade preferences. The Commission has also recently submitted proposals for a major programme to support alternative development projects in areas of illicit cannabis cultivation in the Northern Provinces of Morocco. Close interregional links in precursor control are envisaged via an agreement currently being prepared between the European Community and the Association of South-East Asian Nations. Furthermore, in order to exploit fully the new provisions under the Lomé IV Convention to assist countries of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group in their fight against drugs, a general assessment is being undertaken to identify their concrete needs.

At the European level, a new East-West emphasis is progressively being added to our international drugs cooperation. Operational programmes are already being implemented in Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, and these programmes will shortly be extended to other countries in the region. More generally, the Commission will continue to put emphasis on drugs cooperation in the Community's external relations by continuing to identify it as a priority in its cooperation agreements with third countries.

I have spoken about some of the initiatives which are being taken by the European Community. We are at a crucial point in the rapidly developing history of Europe. Only a few days now separate us from the important date of 1 November, when the Treaty on European Union will enter into force, marking a new stage in the process of European integration. The Treaty identifies drugs as a priority issue and creates important new opportunities for action. The problem of drug dependence is singled out in the new provision which the Treaty makes for cooperation in the area of public health, and this will allow the Community to consolidate and build on its work on drug prevention. Combating drug addiction and unlawful drug trafficking have also been identified as priority issues for cooperation in the fields of justice and home affairs. Likewise, drugs have been identified by the European Heads of State and Government as a priority of the common foreign and security policy of the European Union.

The range of possibilities which the Treaty now offers for action will represent important new weapons for the Community in the fight against the scourge of drugs in the coming years. The Commission intends to ensure that this new legal basis for action at Community level should be exploited to the full in order to promote the highest possible level of coordination and cooperation within the Community and to enable the Community to address the global drug phenomenon in a comprehensive way. More must be done, and more will be done.

As a first step in that process, the Commission is organizing a European scientific and technical seminar on strategies and policies to combat drugs, which will be held in early December this year. That seminar is intended to provide an opportunity for a discussion of the broader policy issues involved and an exchange of views on how the Community response can be improved in the context of the new possibilities provided by the Treaty on European Union. I envisage that the findings of the seminar will provide a good basis on which to draw up an up-to-date, comprehensive and balanced European strategy covering

demand, supply and trafficking - an objective to which I am personally entirely committed.

That is where the United Nations plays such a vital role, because this strategy will work only if it is integrated into a wider coordinated global strategy. That is where the United Nations has its great role, and I have been very glad of the opportunity to participate in the proceedings of these high-level plenary meetings, which are making such an important contribution to furthering world-wide cooperation in the fight against drugs.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.